

PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
MARCH 19, 2015

Session 15-05 a Regular Meeting of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission was called to order on March 19, 2015 at 5:35 pm by Chair Matt Steffy at the Cowles Council Chambers City Hall located at 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

**PRESENT:** COMMISSIONERS LOWNEY, MACCAMPBELL, STEFFY, ARCHIBALD, BRANN, AND ROEDL

**ABSENT:** COMMISSIONER LILLIBRIDGE (EXCUSED)

**STAFF:** JULIE ENGBRETSSEN, DEPUTY CITY PLANNER  
MIKE ILLG, COMMUNITY RECREATION COORDINATOR  
RENEE KRAUSE, CMC, DEPUTY CITY CLERK

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Chair Steffy requested a motion to approve the agenda.

LOWNEY/MACCAMPBELL - MOVED TO APPROVE THE AGENDA

There was no discussion.

The agenda was approved by consensus of the Commission.

**PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS ALREADY ON THE AGENDA**

Chair Steffy invited the public to comment and requested them to please sign in they will have 3 minutes.

Pat Moss, city resident, has dedicated her life to dogs. She has tried to teach the general populace on the proper care of dogs and training and responsibility of pet ownership. She does not take her dogs to Bishop's Beach because it is a crap shoot. She receives several phone calls a year from people, who have had their dogs attacked, and the owner does nothing; she worked for several years at the Homer Vet and she knows that animals get injured or killed at the beach and it happens regularly. This is not a weekly event but it should be noted. Her other "hot button" is people not cleaning up after their animals. She has travelled to dog shows for over 30 years and stayed in hotels and she is appalled at the number of people who do not clean up after their dogs. She is offended when she sees dog poop wherever she goes and there are environmental impacts to consider; it is our responsibility to clean up after our pets, besides it is not pleasant to step in; she advocated for dogs on leash at the beach and more receptacles for waste, it does not bother her to put a poop bag in her coat pocket but it certainly offends most people. She is not sure how they are going to enforce this.

Woody Almon commented on his visiting that beach for past 30-40 years now and asked about the ownership of the area to the left and then asked for clarification on what the Commission was proposing. Chair Steffy obliged him with an explanation. Mr. Almon commented that he sees very little birds nesting there and there are enough restrictions in place and believes the birds have plenty of room to go where they want to right now and don't need anymore.

Jack Wiles, not a city resident, but he is a park advocate, stated that one thing you learn really quick in the park world is that you can't be everything to everybody and you can't manage everything in the same time and same place. Mr. Wiles stated he believes that the commission should stay the course, stay where they are at which is vehicles to the right and pedestrians to the left, it's a good compromise. It works and is a good solution. It protects the resources. It is where we started at and where we need to finish. One thing that his group has spent a lot of time with is options and he advocated for the information that was provided to Julie and the commission should have in their packets. His group has spent a lot of time reviewing options and the commission should have the "handy dandy spiffy chart" they created and believe the commission should just adopt it. It really is a spectrum review and provides a solution to all the beach areas. It is a good approach that balances out the resource and public use and the commission ends up with a good solution and could then spend time on putting some detail to it. At some point in time the commission is going to have to do that. So

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with that he will leave them to their deliberations and thanks for the all the consideration and time you have put into this.

Matt James, city resident for almost 20 years and for the last 15 years he has been a surfer, commented that the only time the waves are good enough is in the winter when they get the proper weather systems. He stated that if they can't park near the waves, it would be too long a walk back to the parking lot and a person could be dead before they reached their vehicle. It's no joke. By shutting the beaches down they are not just excluding various groups but shutting them out too. Mr. James said that they are respectful of the beach; don't do brodies and that type of thing.

Chair Steffy requested Mr. James to point on the map where they park; Mr. James said they park where they are not supposed to down by the slough mouth depending on where it is at the time, they take the "road between the berms" and park in the area by the slough mouth.

Commissioner Archibald inquired if they would be amenable to a seasonal closure. Mr. James responded that would work and even offered to pay for an annual permit as this area is the best in town since there are too many other factors in other locations such as shifting sand bars, etc.

Yan Kandror, city resident, over 20 years out east and used coal for heat, he knows that many use coal and go to the beach to collect coal and it would be too difficult to go to another area. He also said in response to a question from Chair Steffy that he collects the coal mostly in the winter and would agree with seasonal closure of the beach.

Chair Steffy requested a recess at 5:51 p.m. The meeting was called back to order at 5:56 p.m.

Anita Beddingfield, resident, diagnosed with Parkinson's, she goes to Bishops Beach and it has been a wonderful place for her, she goes almost every day. She studies and reads, meditates, its company; watches families, people with dogs running, there have been many negative comments about the beach but she doesn't see much of that and she is there nearly every day reading or studying her bible. Ms. Beddingfield wanted to advocate for those users that are too crippled to walk from the parking lot to the beach to view, she is not the only one. There are many families that bring their handicapped children to the beach and it would be very difficult if they were not allowed to drive out onto the beach to see the water and things from the parking lot. Ms. Beddingfield mentioned a few names of people she knew that were disabled in some manner and would be denied access to the beach if the commissioners prohibited vehicles on the beach.

Nina Faust, not a city resident but a pretty regular beach user since she has a little dog now and she concurred with Pat Moss' comments, her little dog is not off leash. Ms. Faust stated she is a responsible pet owner and picks up after her dog; she commented on the first committee trying for fairness in use between the vehicles and pedestrians and further commented some people don't want vehicles around when they are walking along the beach even if they are being respectful because it encroaches on their personal enjoyment of the beach. Ms. Faust felt it was very important to honor the intention of the first beach committee where they set aside the easterly portion for pedestrians only. She thought it unfortunate that there was no teeth in it as they thought signage would work. But it hasn't worked and over the last two years, and that area has seen increasingly more use. She goes to that area and observes and believes that if it was not accessible to vehicles it would be different, if the first storm berm was not being driven on, the softer berm would re-vegetate, there are pockets of grass and plants, there are other areas too. You can see evidence in the churned up soil. Ms. Faust urged the commission to close the eastern end to vehicles.

Ted Schmidt, city resident, understands why that this has become such an issue. He noted there was enforcement for a period of time and does not understand why this body does pursue where that funding went and why that 4 wheeler sits on a trailer. He commented that most people walk where the sand is compacted because it makes for easier walking and then vehicular traffic trying to avoid pedestrians and their actions being misperceived when they have to rev their engines a little bit because they had to get out in the softer sand to go around the people walking.

He started a personal poll, he provided three options one was the recommendation from the commission to close the beach from March thru October east all the way to the end of the spit, a middle path to close the beach from Bishop's Beach to Mariner Park seasonally with the exception of people gathering coal or other permitted uses and the last option was leave it the way it was and have

more enforcement. Out of the 25 people the majority chose option C. He asked if they looked into this issue. He has looked into this a little and believes that the enforcement was taken to the Port and Harbor for their parking out on the spit. The Police Department let it go. He noted it is hard to get everything into 3 minutes as the buzzer went off, and continued to comment that they used to setnet out at Louie's Lagoon and that was closed off to traffic and the native corporation is taking their lead so you can't get out on the east side anymore and now you want to close off the west side. There is more of the public that uses it in a discreet and respectful fashion than what is portrayed here and he is a little frustrated that it is a little one sided on the negative of all the people that are out there and that they are using one group against another and he doesn't think it is appropriate. Thank you for your time.

Roy Morris lived in Homer and the Homer area since 1955 and has used the beach since 1956 and will continue to do so; he gathers coal, and you can look right now in the back of his truck since he hasn't had time to unload it yet. He doesn't know whose bright idea all this is but if they check they will find that they do not have the authority to regulate that beach. To the high tide level, to his understanding, is considered navigable waters of the United States and they set the precedence on that and he is in total disagreement of any closure of vehicles on that beach.

Ty Gates, uses the beach for a number of reasons, he is a birder, surfer, and takes his dogs to the beach, and a lot of the surf spots you could get to them walking but once your done surfing getting back to your car is not easy in the winter, the beaches are getting more use this past winter, maybe more education would be appropriate, cars going down there and burning tires, never seen a police car down there, We would like to keep the use of our beaches and he believes it may be the most popular beach in Alaska but he can't see shutting it down. If they shut it down a little bit then they will ask for more and more.

Chair Steffy acknowledged the written public comments received regarding access to the beach. He thanked the public for their attendance and comments.

Clare Ulman, city resident, thanked the commission for allowing her to comment now as she was unable to get off work in time. She heard Dr. Broshes and he had some very good points, but it is not specific to Bishops Beach regarding vaccinations; she is frequent visitor Bishops Beach and takes her dogs there for socialization, her dogs are duck hunters and this is a good place to do water training. She did not support any restrictions on vehicles and advocated for the current uses to continue. She did not see the problems at Bishop's Beach that Dr. Broshes recited. Ms. Ulman advocated for the traditional uses to continue.

## **VISITORS**

A. Marianne Aplin, Manager, Islands and Ocean Visitor Center, US Fish & Wildlife

Mark Weber, Deputy Manager, appeared on behalf of the US Fish & Wildlife; spoke on their position and concerns regarding the vehicular impact to the berms, vegetation, habitat, migratory birds, mammals and enforcement.

Some points made were

- The successful re-vegetation of the first berm and if vehicular traffic stayed off the second or storm berm it would re-vegetate too.
- Concern for the responsibility to the birds that are protected by law and see numerous vehicles tearing up the vegetation, it is not just a driving issue.
- Vehicles cause disruptions to migratory birds
- Sea mammals are protected by Federal regulations
  - there were approximately 120 strandings between Anchor Point and Homer. There were several attacked by dogs however he cannot testify that the animals died because of those attacks. Another reason to protect them is also the communicable diseases that they can transfer to the dogs.
- Advocated for dogs on leash for the protection of those animals found alive

Mr. Weber stated he has personally witnessed owners having difficulties controlling their pets once they are on to the wild animal.

Questions from the Commission were as follows:

- Understanding of the property lines and the definition of berms with respect to Storm Berm.
- How many strandings (cases) they have at Bishops Beach compared to the other areas
- Enforcement ability of an administrative site?
- Have they considered being changed to refuge lands?

Mr. Weber responded the following:

Animal Strandings are about 120 annually - at Bishops Beach approximately 20, the rest are split between Mariners Park beach, Land's End and various spots along the beach all the way to Anchor Point. Most of the animals are dead, less than 10% are alive. Mr. Weber considers Dr. Hahn's (sp) cabins to the access road as Bishops Beach.

- US Fish and Wildlife has Ownership Title but are not able to enforce any other regulations, city or state, except the migratory and sea mammal regulations, their ownership ends at mean high tide. The major concern ends at that second berm area and have no objection to people collecting coal, surfing etc. All the discussion by the commission so US Fish & Wildlife can support

Chair Steffy pointed out on the map the berms and area in question for the audience. He then asked about the ownership of land and the 64 earthquake. Chair Steffy commented that historical use does not necessarily mean legal use.

Commissioner Brann invited people to go to the beach on Tuesday, March 24th at 6:30 p.m. and that they can note where the mean high tide mark is as that is the stated ownership line.

B. Dr. Dot Sherwood, Homer Veterinary Clinic

Dr. Sherwood was unable to attend; Dr. Ralph Broshe was present in her place.

Dr. Broshe read from a prepared statement regarding dogs and beaches. He referenced information that can be found on the internet at PetFriendly.com, listing Bishop's Beach as one of three pet friendly beaches in Alaska. It does note dogs on leash are welcome.

He provided information on the following:

- Due to the number of dogs at Bishop's Beach dog feces has become a problem
- Health related issues with regards to spread of disease, effects on the ecosystem and marine habitats by contamination
- Diseases that can be spread between dogs such as parvo, distemper and parasites
- Strong recommendation not to bring puppies to the beach until they have received their vaccinations along with updates for all older animals too.
- Zoonotic issues, spread of illness and disease from animals to humans such as salmonella, coliform bacteria and giardia
  - Children playing in the surf are very susceptible to infection of microscopic parasites in the water.
  - Beaches in the Lower 48 have been closed due to high bacteria count, we do have the colder weather and higher tides that help avoid this problem but not necessarily prevent it.
  - Harvesting shellfish and fish from these areas could present problems
- Dogs can also be infected and infect sea mammals such as otters, live or dead, seals and sea lions
  - Canine distemper is a major problem within Sea Mammals causing a large die off in the North Sea.
  - Seals and mammals that have been rehabilitated must be tested before release
- Recent mauling of sea mammal at Mariner Park Beach
- More education is needed on Sea Mammal Stranding guidelines and the impact of loose dogs on wildlife is vital
- Increase in dog fights on the beach, some resulting in severe or life threatening injuries to the animals and hardships and heartache to the owners.
- Interactions between dogs and people since you are never quite sure if the animal is aggressive or enthusiastic

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- Dogs that are not neutered or spayed may present more problems. Females in season will cause a non-altered male to have no common sense at all.
- Enforcement of the city licensing requirements.
- Recommendations consisted of establishing specific hours or locations for dogs off leash, provide more baggies for owners to clean up after their animals, more receptacles for waste, penalties for not having your animal licensed and picking up your dog waste; and education efforts on all the above items.

Chair Steffy inquired how difficult it would be to obtain any statistics on the number of dog fights. Dr. Brosches was unsure of the availability of the information but it could probably be obtained.

**C. Homer High School Youth Survey - A Presentation Regarding Bishop's Beach**

Bryce Donich, Rylie Donich and Owen Delehanty presented a short video on a survey of 105 Homer High School Students on safety issues and vehicle recommendations currently being considered for Bishop's Beach.

They also asked those students that responded

- How often do you go to Bishop's Beach?
- At what times do you visit Bishop's Beach?
- Do you think trash is a problem at Bishop's Beach?
- Do you think safety is an issue at Bishop's Beach?

They also showed a picture of the beach and the options regarding complete freedom or restrictions on where vehicles were allowed.

- More than half of the respondents would not have restrictions on vehicles
- The next group would have some limitations to vehicles
- The smallest percentage would have no vehicles on the beach.

The next chart showed responses in yes or no responses to safety concerns on the beach

- The majority of respondents stated yes they were concerned about safety but it was directed at drug paraphernalia, glass, and reckless driving issues.

In response to Commissioners queries the students reported finding or seeing the actions previously noted on visits to the beach. They also agreed with seasonal or restricted vehicles usage, recommended prohibiting glass containers on the beach, agreed that fire rings placed in the popular areas would be used and the proposed areas are suitable however education or notice of the availability of the fire rings may help the public. There have been comments from other teens about complaints of inappropriate departures by vehicles from the parking lot later at night but a question regarding complaints from private property owners was not included in the survey.

The commission encouraged the teens to continue speaking with their peers.

**RECONSIDERATION**

There were no items for reconsideration.

**ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA**

**A. Minutes for the special meeting of March 2, 2015**

Chair Steffy requested any comments, questions or corrections regarding the items on the consent agenda. Hearing none he requested a motion for adoption of the consent agenda.

**LOWNEY/BRANN - MOVED TO ADOPT THE CONSENT AGENDA.**

There was no discussion.

**VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.**

Motion carried.

Chair Steffy had a request from the public to allow comment.

#### **STAFF & COUNCIL REPORTS/COMMITTEE REPORTS/BOROUGH REPORTS**

##### **A. Staff Report re: Recap of the March 2, 2015 Meeting**

Ms. Engebretsen reported on the following:

- that she did not have the status update from Public Works Department on Karen Hornaday Park but believed the project is done and should be in the process of closing it out.
- Next meeting they will be making a motion regarding funding for the symposium
- Coffee Table is scheduled for KBBJ April 1<sup>st</sup> the commission should be clear on who is speaking since there cannot be more than 3 commissioners participating including via telephone as that would constitute a quorum and violating the open Meetings Act.
- distributed the email comments and recommendations from Mr. Wiles and apologized to Mr. Wiles that these were not included in the packet.
- A public hearing was tentatively scheduled for the April 2<sup>nd</sup> Special meeting but that will not be happening since they were to review the policy and a public hearing was scheduled for the April 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- She attended a meeting with information on a potential service area and the good news was that the City would be able to maintain control of its parks and park maintenance and the service area would take on programming and possibly community center. The draft Needs Assessment should be ready for review at the April 16<sup>th</sup> meeting; tonight is the first night of surveys and are hoping to get 100 respondents

Ms. Engebretsen then reviewed the recommendations made to date:

1. Install 3 fire pits on city owned parcels Bishops Beach Park, near the end of Main Street & Ohlson Lane and at the end of Crittenden
2. Consider 3 options for closing the beach to vehicles
  - a. No vehicles Bishop's Beach to the Slough mouth
  - b. No vehicles between Bishop's Beach and Mariner Park April 1<sup>st</sup> - September 30<sup>th</sup>
  - c. No vehicles east of Bishop's Beach to the end of the spit April 1<sup>st</sup> - September 30<sup>th</sup>
3. Place a Permanent, Natural materials Barrier to keep vehicles out of the area between Bishop's Beach and the mouth of the slough
4. Add Bishop's Beach and Beluga Slough to the existing Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN)
5. Hire two seasonal beach patrol employees
6. Draft and Ordinance to define and ban reckless driving as it would apply to all of City of Homer beaches
7. Improve Signage

The following has been postponed: Place a natural barrier to the right from beach access to deter vehicles traffic from crossing private property and extend to medium tide line

Other recommendations or solutions:

- Increase dog waste education
- Additional Trash receptacles at Crittenden and Main Street/Ohlson locations
- Community outreach and education on beach rules
- Education on beach resources
- Delineate private property in the Bishop's Beach Access area
- Placement of rocks to prevent or mark where vehicles should drive east of Bishop's Beach
- placement of a Park Host, Chief Robl stated that this person would also be required to testify in court on beach enforcement issues.

##### **B. Mike Illg, Community Recreation Report**

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Mr. Illg was unable to stay past 6:30 p.m. Commissioner Lowney provided the report regarding the upcoming Symposium.

She referred to the form that the group created along with a tentative floor plan and agenda. Commissioner Lowney then provided a synopsis of the various groups that will or could participate in the inaugural Parks, Recreation and Trails Symposium. This year's theme is Homer...On the Move! No invites have been sent out that is what they would like the commissioners to do. Take the form and pass it out to groups that may be interested in participating in this event.

She then read the handout for the benefit of the audience present. Commissioner Lowney encouraged the commissioners to contact their groups or groups that they think would be interested in participating. There is no fee to participate and no deadline to return the form so they will take forms up to the event as far as Commissioner Lowney was aware of, she additionally requested Chair Steffy to act as the moderator for the event. They will determine the funding amounts at the April 2<sup>nd</sup> special meeting.

**C. Angie Otteson, Parks Report**

Ms. Otteson was not present and no report was provided to the City Clerk.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

There were no items scheduled for this meeting.

**PENDING BUSINESS**

**A. Dogs, Birds and Habitat Oh My!**

1. Recommendations Regarding Dogs
2. Recommendations to Protect Birds and Habitat

Commissioner Lowney researched pricing on the doggie bag dispensers and provided the information to the commission regarding the price breaks and that these can be refilled so are reusable. She advocated for expending at least \$500 on these baggie dispensers. She further added that the receptacle for disposal is more of a problem than dispensers for bags.

STEFFY/LOWNEY - MOVE TO RECOMMEND THE CITY OF HOMER PURCHASE 500 DOGGIE BAG DISPENSERS.

Discussion was held on the value to the community and funding options. Staff explained that this will be a recommendation to Council so they really did not need to focus on funding options at this time.

VOTE. YES. ARCHIBALD, STEFFY, MACCAMPBELL, LOWNEY, ROEDL, BRANN

Motion carried.

Chair Steffy then made the following motion regarding the disposal units:

STEFFY/LOWNEY - MOVE TO RECOMMEND THE CITY PLACE STATIONARY DOG WASTE DISPENSERS AT PUBLIC BUILDINGS, TRAILS AND PARKS AND ENCOURAGES OTHER AGENCIES AND BUSINESSES TO DO THE SAME.

There was a brief discussion on this item and implementation, maintenance and possible related issues. Commissioner Lowney called for the vote.

VOTE. YES. BRANN, ARCHIBALD, STEFFY, MACCAMPBELL, LOWNEY, ROEDL

Motion carried.

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Commissioner Brann stated he would like to make the following motion:

BRANN/LOWNEY - MOVE TO RECOMMEND THE CITY PARTNER WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS TO PROVIDE EDUCATION AND MATERIALS ON RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERSHIP.

There was brief discussion on including all kinds of organizations and businesses.

VOTE. YES. ROEDL, BRANN, ARCHIBALD, STEFFY, MACCAMPBELL, LOWNEY

Motion carried.

Chair Steffy then brought the issue regarding leashed and unleashed areas. Commissioner Brann moved the following:

BRANN/MACCAMPBELL - MOVED THAT THE FOLLOWING AREAS BE DESIGNATED AS LEASHED ONLY: AREA 2, AREA 5, WITHIN MARINER PARK, WITHIN BISHOPS BEACH PARK, AND AREA 7.

Discussion on how to delineate the area in front of Mariner Park, inclusion of parking lots and all parks, protection of wildlife, allowing off leash a certain distance, they are unable to address all situations. Chair Steffy restated the motion and inquired if they were ready to vote on the motion.

Commissioner Archibald requested clarification on what the commission intends in regards to dogs in Mariner Park. Chair Steffy reiterated that dogs would have to be on leash within the picnic areas, camping areas and parking lot. Commissioner MacCampbell opined that they should have a separate recommendation to define what they want within the parks.

Chair Steffy then restated the motion for Commissioner Roedl and called for the vote.

VOTE. YES. LOWNEY, MACCAMPBELL, STEFFY, ARCHIBALD, BRANN, ROEDL

Motion carried

Commissioner Lowney wanted to establish that all dogs must be on leash within the parks and within 300 feet from all parking lots.

Discussion ensued on 300 feet being too excessive and how would they effectively delineate this requirement visually as the public may perceive distance differently. Not stating a specific distance would bring about all kinds of perceptions of the appropriate distance before unleashing animals. Staff noted that even a distance of 50 feet in some cases you would be on private property. If the commission wanted to require leash only in the parks and parking lots that was one thing but would have to address each individual situation and not sure they wanted to do that.

Commissioner Lowney still advocated for getting animals away from any congestion before being unleashed.

Discussion continued on creating a dog off leash area and it could be seasonal and posted with whatever distance is agreed upon, such as, "Dog off leash area ahead 100 yards" something to that effect and seasonal so when you have nesting and migration in those habitat areas.

Chair Steffy asked if there was additional discussion on leash recommendation.

Further discussion on the existing leash law which is actually voice control, there should be some areas to accommodate those people who do not want to be near dogs, the intent to alleviate the issues within the more congested areas between the beach access and Crittenden access.

Chair Steffy stated that his intent to allow adequate time for the public to comment and since this action may affect the possible new zone he does not want to address the next 6 items on the agenda in 10 minutes.

ARCHIBALD/LOWNEY - MOVED TO EXTEND THE MEETING TO 8:15 P.M. TO SPEND THE NEXT 10 MINUTES DISCUSSING PENDING BUSINESS ITEMS THEN T 8:00 P.M. ALLOW FOR PUBLIC COMMENT.



There was no discussion

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried.

**B. Beach Zones**

1. Recommendations to Define a Pedestrian Only Zone
2. Recommendations regarding Motorized and Non-Motorized Traffic Zones
3. Recommendation to Establish a Limited Permitting System
4. Recommendation to Designate a New Zone
  - a. Boundaries
  - b. Allowable Activities

ARCHIBALD/LOWNEY - MOVED TO CHANGE AREA 8 TO AREA 8A BEACH ACCESS TO CRITTENDEN AND 8B WILL BE CRITTENDEN WEST

Discussion on establishing the new zones and then determining what behavior will be allowed in these zones.

VOTE. YES. REODL, BRANN, ARCHIBALD, STEFFY, MACCAMPBELL, LOWNEY.

Motion carried.

LOWNEY/MACCAMPBELL - MOVED TO POSTPONE DEFINING THE NEW ZONES TO THE NEXT MEETING.

There was no discussion.

VOTE. YES. NON-OBJECTION. UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Motion carried

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Land Allocation Plan Recommendation 2015**

Chair Steffy inquired if there were any questions of recommendations on the Land Allocation Plan.

Commissioner Archibald noted that page 56 is stated up for lease and that is where the new sculpture is going to be placed. A brief discussion on that area will be changing since restrooms are going to be built it is in the planning stage so it will not be leased out.

Commissioner Lowney had several recommendations. Chair Steffy inquired if the commission could address item B under New Business first then since it will take a shorter amount of time to be accomplished. Commissioner Lowney acquiesced.

**B. Next Meeting Deliverables and Discussion Topics**

Chair Steffy opened discussion on what the commission has tentatively scheduled for the April 2<sup>nd</sup> special meeting and if it was permissible to have items from this meeting on that agenda. Staff indicated it was allowed.

Discussion on the items for the next meeting ensued. It was determined that there will be no public hearing, land allocation plan all current pending business and all new business to pending business.

There was no disagreement from the commissioners.

### **INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS**

- A. Commission Annual Calendar 2015
- B. Commissioner Attendance at City Council Meetings 2015
- C. Kachemak Bay Water Trail Project Receives 2015 Project Excellence Award
- D. Brochure Samples from Other Communities Re: Dogs
- E. Homer News Article October 27, 2011 Re: Boulder Barrier on Bishop's Beach to Delineate Private Property
- F. True Grit: A New Vision for Healthy Beaches in Nova Scotia
- G. Brochures Distributed by Homer Police Department
- H. Animal Control/Shelter Scope of Work

There was no discussion on the informational materials.

### **COMMENTS OF THE AUDIENCE**

Chair Steffy invited the audience to comment on any subject.

Lani Raymond noted on page 35-36 of the packet, under birds, that George Matz wanted seasonal closure of Section 7 or Beach 7 and she believed that is an error. She stated that she believed he was referring to dogs being on leash or off leash. She also commented that she had the documentation to prove his point.

Chair Steffy did note that Mr. Matz referred to the seasonal closure for vehicles in Area 7 and Staff apologized for the ill written memorandum which may have alluded to something different.

Louise Ashmun, urged the commission to make specific recommendations to City Council, the commission is the one the heard the public comment and she would like this commission to stand at some point. Ms. Ashmun continued by stating two people testified that they train their bird dogs in Area 7 and that makes her nervous that they have their dogs in an area that supposed to be protected. She also recommended that they leave some wiggle room for changes in seasonal closures due to Climate Change and while she does not have the expertise she recommended that this be considered when thinking about seasonal closures.

Ginny Espenshade, agreed with the commission making specific motions to council, they are the ones that hear the richness of the testimony. Ms. Espenshade commented on the existing leash law, which is loosely worded, no pun intended, but voice control is as good as how much you can distract your dog as much as what is distracting your dog, she recommended amending the existing leash law to specifically disallows voice control in the parks or designate specific areas where there is an exception to the leash law; another issue that keeps coming up is education and what would be asked of this person is more of a ranger or police officer and suggested sharing staffing at Islands and Ocean and storage of the ATV at their facility since she knows some positions will be getting cut due to the budget issues.

Ted Schmidt, doesn't want to seem opposed to everything the commission comes up with and he would be able to support leash law in parking lots and in campgrounds, he has a big dog and can be an aggressive dog but the bird dog is trained not to take off after just any birds, that is the training he is only trained to go after what I shoot. We work very hard with our animals. They work with them on leash so that they will listen when off leash. There are many dog owners who don't mind there animals. He spoke about redundancy and he does not see vehicles in Mud Bay or dogs in Louie's Lagoon so he doesn't believe that more is needed. Mr. Schmidt believes it takes enforcement with regards to vehicles and dogs in areas that there are already existing laws.

Bill Ostwald commented that some people have good dogs, well trained and all that, but there are many who don't. He has experienced many dogs running up on to his property to go after the pheasants that nest there. He doesn't see where a leash law is uncalled for; there is a lot of private property down there and the owner does not have to post his property and the individual is supposed to know where they are at and there will be issues with the city allowing people access to those private property owners. Mr. Ostwald commented on the lack of enforcement and the recent experience with a reckless driver and multiple calls to the Police who took a long time to show up, he provided the tag

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MARCH 19, 2015

number and he did read later in the paper about they pulled him over because he was reported. The problem is they only get a warning or spoken to and without enforcement it will not stop. If there is no penalty there is no reason to stop. Mr. Ostwald is surprised that someone is going to get seriously hurt and strongly recommended that they put a gate across and unless they need to collect coal keep everybody out of there until they get this figured out.

**COMMENTS OF THE CITY STAFF**

Ms. Engebretsen thanked Ginny Espenshade for working with the High School Students and that the Land Allocation Plan is to put city owned property up for lease and if there are any other questions or concerns feel free to send her an email or come and see her to discuss those concerns.

Ms. Krause commented had no comments.

**COMMENTS OF THE COUNCILMEMBER** *(If one is present)*

There were no council members present.

**COMMENTS OF THE COMMISSION**

Commissioner Roedl had no comments.

Commissioner Brann wanted to thank whoever decided to include the Nova Scotia report it was very informative and strongly recommended everyone read the document. He appreciated all the written and spoken public comments. He further stated that they really need to think about long term not just this summer or next.

Commissioner Archibald thanked the audience and the efforts of staff.

Commissioner MacCampbell thanked staff and the kids for their presentation. One day in the future they will be sitting up here and will be going back and forth. He appreciated the audience bearing with them the whole time.

Commissioner Lowney thanked the audience for their comments and staying through to the end. She reminded the commissioners about the forms for the symposium.

**COMMENTS OF THE CHAIR**

Chair Steffy appreciated the audience taking time to attend these meetings and apologized for the length he encouraged everyone to submit their comments to the clerk. He reminded everyone about the show on KBBI Coffee Table April 1<sup>st</sup>.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Chair Steffy adjourned the meeting at 8:27 p.m. The next **SPECIAL MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2015** at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall Cowles Council Chambers 491 E. Pioneer Avenue, Homer, Alaska.

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Renee Krause, CMC, Deputy City Clerk I

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_